14

19 December 1963

Noted by DCI
WElder

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with the President on Cuba at 1100 on 19 December 1963

1. Included in the meeting were Acting Secretary of State Ball, Acting Secretary of Defense Gilpatric, Secretary Cyrus Vance, Secretary Douglas Dillon, Ambassador Thompson, General Wheeler, Mr. Donald Wilson, Mr. McGeorge Bundy, Mr. Bromley Smith, Mr. Edwin Martin, Mr. Ted Sorensen, Mr. John Crimins, Mr. Gordon Chase, Mr. George Ready, Mr. Bill Moyers, General Carter, Mr. Helms, and Mr. Fitz-Gerald.

2. The President, after full discussion, postponed any sizable operations by FitzGerald, primarily to avoid any possible embarrassment to our OAS negotiations on the Venezuelan arms cache. We are authorized to continue to put forward proposals for operations and also to continue preparations for air ops. The main thrust was to greatly increase political action with Canada, Britain, Spain, Italy, and others in an effort to promote greater economic blockade.

3. Mr. Bundy later stated that his analysis of the meeting was that the President would continue to approve smaller FitzGerald-type operations even though they would be relatively unrewarding if they would assist in keeping up the morale of the troops on shore, of our agents, and otherwise help in keeping the ball rolling.

Marshall S. Carter
Lieutenant General, USA
Acting Director

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting at the White House 19 December 1963

PRESENT: The President

The State Department: Under Secretary George W. Ball, Deputy Under Secretary U. Alexis Johnson, Ambassador at Large Llewellyn Thompson, Assistant Secretary for Inter-American Affairs Edwin Martin, Coordinator of Cuban Affairs John H. Crimmins.

The Defense Department: Deputy Secretary Roswell Gilpatric, Secretary of the Army Cyrus Vance.

Joint Chiefs of Staff: General Wheeler.

USIA: Deputy Director Donald M. Wilson.

The Treasury Department: Secretary Douglas Dillon.

The White House Staff: Executive Assistant to the President McGeorge Bundy, Messrs. George Reedy and Williams Moyers.and Gordon Chase.

CIA: General Marshall S. Carter, Messrs. Richard Helms and Desmond FitzGerald.

1. The President arrived at the meeting approximately five minutes early -- prior to the arrival of several members of the group including Mr. Bundy. Without a formal introduction I commenced the scheduled briefing on the Agency Cuban program at the urging of the President and despite the activities of the Presidential photographer.

2. The President appeared interested in the number of agents inside Cuba but made no particular comment concerning the program until the subject of economic denial was introduced. He asked to be told what additional measures could be taken to step up the denial program. I said that the

principal soft spots among free world countries appeared at the present time to be Canada, the U.K. and Spain. The President requested a memorandum setting forth specifics concerning leaks of economically strategic items from these three countries together with recommendations as to what could be done to stop these leaks. He requested Under Secretary Ball to prepare to make demarches to the governments of these three countries as well as any others engaged in the Cuba trade contrary to our interests. He appeared particularly interested in the subject of economic denial and returned to it several times.

3. After hearing a brief description of our progress in connection with promoting disaffection among the Cuban military, the President said that it did not seem to him that we had gone very far along this line and that one day those concerned in Cuba matters, including himself, would have to face the "grand jury" (of domestic public opinion) to account for our progress in our attempts to find a solution to the Cuban situation. I pointed out that the program being presented was, with the exception of the economic denial item, entirely a covert program and, if run at full capacity, would tax the capabilities of the clandestine services -- in other words, that if new and broader measures against Cuba were to be undertaken, they would have to be within the overt field.

4. After a brief description of the sabotage and harassment program the subject of the proposed Matanzas raid was discussed. After hearing the pros and cons the President stated that he did not feel that the present time was a good one to conduct an operation of this magnitude which carried a less than 50 percent chance of success. He said that he felt that such an operation, if pinned directly on the U.S., might cause the Soviets to move in the wrong direction with respect to Cuba, i.e, increase their economic aid or their military presence. Recognizing that a cessation of raids would have a bad morale effect within Cuba, he agreed that low risk operations, with admittedly lower economic and psychological impact, should be conducted. He further stated that planning for such operations as Matanzas should be continued. General Wheeler raised the possibility of air strikes against major targets by autonomous groups. This was discussed and it was agreed that in view of the fact that preparations would take at least three months, these preparations should proceed and the question re-examined at the time that capabilities have been perfected.

5. On the question of autonomous groups the President asked the cost of these operations (five million dollars). He also asked the cost of Cuban operations for the current year (21 or 2 million dollars) and the total Agency budget.

6. The intelligence summary concerning Cuba prepared by General Carter for the meeting was examined.

7. Mr. Bundy then reviewed current U.S. policy vis-a-vis Cuba. He then went down a check list of possible new courses of action taken from the Department of State paper prepared for the December 13 Standing Group meeting. Unilateral actions presented were:

(1) Air attacks by our autonomous groups. No further discussion.

(2) Selective relaxation of U.S. controls against exile groups in Florida. No comment on Mr. Bundy's generally unfavorable presentation.

(3) Military feints. No comment on generally unfavorable presentation.

(4) Low-level reconnaissance flights. Comment by Assistant Secretary Martin concerning the value of keeping open the franchise for low-level flights. Acknowledgement of certain value to the intelligence community. No decision requested.

(5) Extension of efforts to eliminate free world shipping from the Cuba trade. No decision requested.

(6) Presidential declaration concerning U.S. policy on Cuba designed to stimulate anti-Castro dissidence in the armed forces. Mr. Bundy's comments indicated that there was room for a stronger statement than that made by President Kennedy in Miami.

(7) Talks with the Soviets and the Cubans. Not elaborated and no comment.

(8) Other forms of covert actions. Not specified or elaborated.

8. In connection with bilateral and multilateral actions involving the cooperation of the OAS and nations of the Caribbean, Mr. Bundy stated that the nature and import of the recently discovered arms cache in Venezuela constitutes a point of departure for such actions as search and seizure on the high seas or an OAS-sponsored quarantine against arms shipments. Mr. Helms then briefly described the nature of the arms cache and the plans involving those arms as set forth in captured Venezuelan communist documents. Mr. Helms showed a map prepared from those documents indicating the manner in which the arms would have been used to tie up the city of Caracas during the recent election. Mr. Martin then briefed concerning OAS action with regard to the arms cache. He said that the committee appointed by the OAS to investigate had called for additional evidence from the Venezuelan government which would take two to three weeks to assemble. He said that he felt that the OAS report would be out in mid-January although the question of Cuban defense against the Venezuelan charges had not yet been resolved. Mr. Bundy referred to the efforts being made to increase the effectiveness of surveillance of arms smugglers in Central America and referred to the possibility of an OAS-sponsored search and seizure on the high seas.

9. Under Secretary Ball stated that the Department of Justice has warned that a number of students, some of more respectable stripe than the last group which visited Cuba, were planning to try to visit Cuba during the Christmas vacation and that there is evidence of larger numbers planning to do the same thing during the summer. He said that the Attorney General was bothered by this and had suggested the relaxation of present rules concerning travel to Cuba. Mr. Ball said that the Department of State is tentatively opposed to such relaxation particularly because of its effect on Latin American countries. The President strongly concurred with the Department of State position. He said that he did not propose to change or relax present regulations.

Desmond FitzGerald
Chief, Special Affairs Staff

14-00000

13 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with the President, 13 December - 9:30 a.m.

1. Introduced General Carter but was unable to explain his responsibilities.

2. Introduced Peer de Silva. The President spoke briefly of what he expects of the Station and the representatives of the Government in the Saigon community.

3. Reviewed the Checklist. [I emphasized (a) the dangers of the hostages in Bolivia, stating however that while 21 lives are extremely important, nevertheless, we must avoid a policy decision the consequence of which might mean the lives of an undertermined thousands of people in the future. In fact I was saying we must not give the Communists the upper hand in this argument. I explained the critical location of the prisoners, and (b) I called the President's attention to the international oil situation and the deadlock between OPEC and the international oil companies and the opening that this is affording the Italians and possibly the French.]

4. [Noted Item C in the notes, stating we felt, from sensitive sources, Spinelli's observation was incorrect but there was a possibility of a sufficient withdrawal by the Egyptians to make a favorable demonstration of intentions by which we could persuade Fiasal to withhold military aid to the Royalists for an extended period of several months.]

NOTE: Carter and de Silva left the room at this time.

5. [I told the President that subject to Rusk's approval, I intended to issue a series of articles on the weakness of the Soviet economy, drainage on their gold supply, over-commitments on foreign aid, etc. for the political figures who are wavering between leaning on the]

14-00000

[Soviets or the West, such as Sukarno and certain South American countries, so that they will understand they are not leaning on very much when they lean on the Soviets.]

6. Explained that I had given a complete briefing to General Eisenhower and conveyed to the President General Eisenhower's expression of friendship and support.

7. Discussed briefly my talk with Robert Kennedy and urged the President to send a message to Kennedy but not to see him until after the first of the year. I asked for the President's approval to invite Kennedy to accompany me to Saigon.

> NOTE: This invitation has been extended but Kennedy felt it was untimely because of personal family commitments, responsibilities to Jackie, concern on the part of his wife, Mrs. Kennedy, and for other reasons.

8. Mr. Bundy joined in part of these discussions. The President asked what the Attorney General intended to do, that is, stay on or leave. I told the President the Attorney General intended to stay on as Attorney General, but it was not clear to what extent the President wished him to become involved in the activities outside the area of the Office of the Attorney General, such as, intelligence work, NSC problems, counter insurgency matters, etc. I explained to the President that I had told Bobby he could not bring back the intimacy of relationship with the President which he had had with his brother because that was a blood relationship, not an official relationship. A type of relationship which is seldom found between brothers and never found between officials, either in business or government.

9. I gave the President a copy of the memorandum on Soviet Foreign Aid.

JAM:mcm

1/mc

6 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with The President - 9:45 - 6 December 1963

The first part of the meeting involved a discussion with Rusk, McNamara, Rostow, William Bundy and McGeorge Bundy concerning the procedures on MLF.

Rusk requested, and received, approval to brief General Eisenhower and will arrange to have Amb. Merchant, Admiral Ricketts and General Goodpastor present at the briefing. Rusk reported that a group of "young Republicans" opposed the MLF.

Rusk also received approval to brief certain Congressional leaders in small groups, but to intimate that no government, including the United States Government, is committed to the MLF program.

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[Rusk gave an optimistic report on progress and stated the most important objectives of the MLF was to give the Germans a sense of participation in nuclear weapons planning and operations under a scheme providing adequate control by other Allied nations, including the United States.]

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[McNamara stated that Mr. von Hassel had advised him that the MLF was a "must" or else the Germans would undoubtedly pursue an independent course in developing their own national nuclear weapons resources. Rusk indicated that failure to proceed with the MLF might force a German-French arrangement on nuclear weapons. McNamara stated there was no military requirement for the MLF but the force will have a military (?) utility and will permit a reduction in planned United States national capabilities and hence the cost, which is considerable, is not really an additional U.S. military cost.]

The President then suggested a briefing of Congressional leaders, both Democratic and Republican, Senate and House, substantially along the lines of the NSC briefing of yesterday afternoon. [I brought up the question of security and pointed out the dangers. The President asked that I develop a 10 or 15 minute briefing on Soviet strategic capabilities, Soviet defense and Soviet economy, going just as far as I possibly could without endangering sources and methods.] 98

ACTION: Discuss with Cline, et al.

JMC

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The meeting then continued with the President, McGeorge Bundy and McCone. I discussed the foreign aid figures as included in the 6 December memorandum and the special report on Soviet Foreign Economics Programs of 25 October, and stated that I would prepare for the President some special graphics which would show Soviet foreign, economic and military aid, both extensions and draw-downs, to non-Communist countries and Cuba.

> NOTE: Mr. Rostow raised the question earlier as to the validity of comparing our aid figures with USSR's aid figures because the latter did not include aid to satellites. His position is that since we include aid to NATO countries, particularly Turkey, Greece, South Korea, etc., we should examine USSR aid to their satellites in addition to Cuba. This should be examined. I do not know whether the figures are available.

The President reviewed the Checklist and I made the following comments:

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1. I expect the USSR to expand the test ban agreement to cover underground tests and it was quite possible they would soon make claims for vast improvements in seismology. I mentioned the recent information on the LASER beam.

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2. I pointed out the seriousness of the Cambodian situation stating the fact that the Khmer Serei clandestine radio had been located in Southeast Thailand and that my information was that the Thais were not inclined to put it out of business because the Cambodians were broadcasting unfavorably against them.

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3. I noted the additional indicators of possible conflict over Malaysia.

I then explained to the President the source of our information that the Soviet Intelligence Service, on orders from Moscow, was attempting to stimulate communications from India to him, Chief Justice Warren and the Attorney General, urging a full probe into the assassination of the President. I stated that this report comes from a very reliable penetration and we evaluate it quite highly.

We then discussed the assignment of Peer de Silva to Saigon. I stated that the staff had made such recommendation to me, but that I felt it was only a good move if he was to remove Ambassador Lodge. He felt that to do this would have political repercussions and would be

4/MC

tantamount to a vote of no confidence in the military junta, that it would indicate President Johnson's support of Diem rather than the present authorities. Therefore he stated he could not move to remove Lodge but hoped that Lodge would remove himself and become a candidate for the Republican nomination for the Presidency and would be the nominee. (Note: I told the President he wanted things too easy). I told the President that Lodge would destroy de Silva if he opposed his assignment or did not like him, or wished to get rid of him. The President said he would communicate most emphatically with Lodge in this regard and asked Bundy to write an appropriate communication. I told the President this would do no good, that Lodge was absolutely unconscionable in matters of this kind and he had resorted to trickery time and time again during the Eisenhower administration and that he never failed to use the newspapers in order to expose an individual or block an action. I therefore could only conclude that if he was going to keep Lodge on that it would be better to stay with David Smith as Chief of Station, who is a most competent officer but young and not fully experienced, but this proposal did not meet his request that the best and most experienced man we can find be placed on the job. The President said he would exercise the full power of his office to keep Lodge in line and felt our responsibilities in South Vietnam are so great that CIA should have a "four-star man" on the job and that is what he wanted.

JAM/mcm

3 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with the President at his residence on Sunday, Dec. 1 - 10:00 o'clock - about 30 minutes. No one was in attendance.

1. Reviewed a series of reports. There was no Checklist.

2. [The President asked about news from Venezuela, particularly concerned about Chenault.]

3. [Briefly reviewed a clandestine report from Bonn as a means of indicating sources to CIA not available to others.]

4. [Reported to the President that the UN Commission to Saigon felt a bit critical towards the U.S. presence; however we are in some doubt as to whether they will include such criticism in their public report.]

5. Briefly reviewed the final report on the Alvarado case in Mexico City.

6. The President then brought up the question of men in government. Emphasized the need for men, particularly young men. I urged the President to discuss this matter with the Business Council and with the AFL-CIO group. He said that meetings would be arranged this coming week.

7. [I advised the President that I was to meet with Halaby to pursue the SST problem.]

8. [I requested the President to instruct Bundy that Memorandums of Conversation with Heads of State should be distributed to me automatically. Also that the State Department be instructed to send such Memorandums to me. The President agreed.

NOTE: This should be followed up by Mr. Cline. Bundy will apparently discuss this matter later with the President who agreed that such distribution should be automatic except in very special circumstances in which he wished distribution held to his own personal files for reasons of his own choice. I could take no exception to this decision.]

9. We should contact Hoover concerning identification of people sending in ads and letters to the Dallas newspapers.

NOTE: I should call Hoover concerning this.

JAM/mfb (tape)

14-00000

TOP SECRET

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2 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD
EYES ONLY--NO DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Discussion with the President, 30 November 1963

Throughout the conversation the President mentioned a number of very personal problems and asked my help and also asked that Bundy and I act as a team in trying to help him solve some of his problems.

1. He indicated that there must be some Cabinet changes. By inference he made reference to the Attorney General, but not by direct statement. Apparently he is waiting for the Attorney General to decide what role, if any, he wishes to play in the Johnson Administration.

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2. [He stated that Secretary Celebrezze is very anxious for a judgeship and that he, Johnson, was extremely favorably impressed with Sargent Shriver and thought he would be an excellent Secretary of H. E. W. This was enthusiastically endorsed by both Bundy and myself.]

3. He raised the question of whether Mrs. Kennedy might be a very able ambassador.

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4. [He was deeply critical of the handling of Ayub. He questioned whether Ball was the proper man to have gone forward to negotiate with Ayub. He felt that we needed a new ambassador and he asked for recommendations, the name of an ambassador who could handle that Embassy, and more particularly handle Ayub. At this point he asked that Bundy and I work together in searching out names of individuals who might be helpful in a number of critical areas. I protested his criticism of Ball, stating that I felt that Ball had done a very good job in his mission to Pakistan. The President expressed the highest regard for Ayub.]

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5. [He then turned to a discussion of Latin America. Expressed criticism of the Alliance for Progress. Stated that Moscoso was not the man to handle it and he should be replaced and asked who could be his replacement. He also stated that we had not handled the OAS positively enough. He was very critical of our ambassador to the OAS, Acting Ambassador Ward Allen, and asked for recommendations for a replacement.]

6. Throughout the conversation it appeared that President Johnson is not going to be satisfied with the organization as it is now composed and that he will make changes, and at the same time he does not intend to make changes just for the sake of change nor does he intend to move in the "hangers-on of the last 20 years." Apparently he has had a vast number of approaches from people who he termed to be political hacks and said he didn't want any part of any of them.

JAM:mcm

(tape)

1/mc

14-00000

2 December 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with the President, 11:00 a.m., November 30th, in attendance Mr. Bundy, meeting lasted approximately 1 1/2 hours

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1. Reviewed the Checklist. [The President immediately raised the question of what we were doing about Colonel Chennault. He expects most serious public reaction and has a feeling that we are "drifting" on this situation. I assured him we and the Venezuelan government were doing all that was possible. However, he requested more positive action on a report on the actions being taken.]

NOTE: Wish a full report from the station for Sunday morning briefing.

2. No other Checklist items raised any serious questions.

3. The President again raised the question of what we were going to do in Cuba. Bundy advised that a policy meeting was scheduled for Monday, time not set, to discuss Cuban policy. I pointed out to the President the statements of President Kennedy on September 5th, September 13th, and November 20th, 1962 and then I showed the evidence that proved absolutely that arms had been imported into Venezuela from Cuba. I stated that most positive efforts should be made immediately to secure complete OAS agreement on a course of action which would involve a series of steps ranging from economic denial through blockade and even to possible invasion, but that it must be OAS action, otherwise it would involve confrontation with Khrushchev. I stated that if the action was a Hemispheric action I didn't see that the USSR could do much about it. The President agreed but decided to await the policy meeting on Monday.

NOTE: DD/P and WH should prepare full recommendations for positive actions which might be taken unilaterally with the Caribbean states or with the OAS for my use in the policy meeting.

4. I reviewed the report from Mexico City station, 27 November, advising the number of Soviets in Cuba, indicating that this report which we thought was quite responsible more or less verified our own current estimates.

5. Reference the Oswald matter, reviewed with the President CAS Mexico City 7127 reporting on the interrogation of Alvarado. We briefly discussed the composition of the Review Board announced by the President on the 29th. Discussion of the Oswald situation was inconclusive and no action required.

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6. [The President then brought up the question of Pakistan and I reviewed briefly the intelligence community's feeling of concern and their view that our Pakistan relationship was of the greatest importance. Bundy mentioned the forthcoming December meeting between Ayub and General Taylor. The President made no comment but seemed to feel that Taylor should remain in the United States because of serious Defense budget problems. Bundy reviewed the great number of commitments we have made to Pakistan and that we would come to their defense if India should use our arms to attack Pakistan. The President expressed the greatest of confidence in Ayub and a feeling that we had not been forceful enough with him, had not given him a feeling of confidence in our motives and that he had drifted into the thought that we would abandon him in favor of India. He stated that he wished this corrected in a most positive manner.]

7. I reviewed our Cuban overflight program advising the President of the USIB criteria and the extent to which flights were being carried on.

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8. [Reviewed briefly the TACKLE China overflight and stated these had been stood down since the loss of the last plane but we intended to resume which the President thought was proper.

> ACTION: I wish flight plans to meet COMOR priority in targets for at least two flights for submission to the Special Group next Thursday.]

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9. [I advised the President that the ChiCom-India border flights had been completed and that we now planned to brief the Indians, Thailand and very possibly Pakistan. I stated the equipment had been withdrawn from Takhli.]

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14-00000

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10. [I advised the President that the CORONA mission was up and would be brought down on Monday. Also suggested that at an early opportunity I brief him on the CORONA program.]

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11. [Reviewed the Venezuela overflight plan as outlined in memorandum for the Special Group and President approved.

NOTE: I have communicated this approval to General Carter and instructed him to proceed.]

JAM:mcm

(tape)

14-00000

TOP SECRET

29 November 1963

Late developments on the Mexico City investigation of Oswald's activities

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1. Results of the first interrogation of Silvia Duran have been received. Reveals nothing other than confirmation of Oswald's effort to secure authority to enter USSR via Havana. His requests were refused.

2. Result of second interrogation of Silvia Duran has not as yet been received.

3. FBI dispatched a man from Washington to Mexico City at the request of Ambassador Mann.

4. The Nicaraguan, Alvarado, has been turned over to the Mexican authorities for questioning, by the CIA station at the specific request of the FBI.

   NOTE: CIA Headquarters refused this turn-over until FBI request received because FBIis in control of the investigation.

5. Alvarado's story becoming increasingly questionable because of a public statement carried by Mexico City radio and press prior to Alvarado's entering the picture, to the effect that Oswald had received $5,000 from the Cuban Embassy.

To be used by DCI in meeting with the President at 10:30 on 29 November 1963 with Secty. McNamara and Bundy.

14-00000

29 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting at his residence with President Johnson
10:00 a.m. - Thursday - November 28th.
for approximately 30 minutes

1. The President reviewed the Checklist and made the following comments:

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a. [Are we doing all possible to keep Venezuelan authorities informed? I reviewed briefly our penetrations and our activities.]

b. What is the real future in South Vietnam? The President expressed the desire for an objective appraisal and any recommendations that I might have for modification of policy, changes of personnel and draw up a rough estimate of what is the outlook. The President continues to be concerned over public reaction and Congressional reaction against our activities in South Vietnam. The President is obviously opposed to Lodge (his opposition goes back to conflicts in the Senate). He asked for recommendations as to who would be a good man and who could run the American team.

He noted Item b. in the Check list and I pointed out the press exaggeration and distortion which appeared in the New York Times. He asked that I personally meet with the head of the Times in New York, pointing out how such distorted reports seriously damage the American interests. I stated that I would do this.

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[We discussed Item 2.f. having to do with the high level of communications traffic and I stated that this could be considered as an unfavorable indicator.

The President noted without comment report on Israel, USSR, India military aid and Burma.]

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c. [The President asked what the outlook was with Greece. I told him that we expected that Karamanlis would eventually be restored to power. The President stated that he had vigorously opposed our]

Noted by DDCI & LBK

noted by DDCI & Kirkpatrick

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[withdrawal of assistance to Karamanlis, which he felt had a great deal to do with his loss of office.]

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d. [I pointed out to the President that we could expect some trouble in Brazil.]

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e. [The President asked about the future of Prime Minister Inonu of Turkey. I stated that we expected that his government would fall and that he would lose office soon after his return.]

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f. [I repeated to the President briefly my meeting with President Macapagal which is covered in a separate memorandum prepared by Mr. Colby.]

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g. [Also I raised the question of the importance of our taking iniative in the Indonesia matter by working with Macapagal. We might bring Indonesia round and also straighten out the Malayasia problem.]

2. The President then turned to Cuba. He asked how effective our policy was and what was the future of Cuba. He asked how effective the economic denial program was and how we planned to dispose of Castro. He said he did not wish any repetition of any fiasco of 1961, but he felt that the Cuban situation was one that we could not live with and we had to evolve more aggressive policies. He looks to us for firm recommendations. In this connection we should prepare a briefing and also we should study carefully various courses of action.

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3. [The President then raised the question of the deal between the Rumanian government and the Ferguson company for the procurement of a steel mill and asked whether I thought this was a good thing. I replied affirmatively, stating that in my opinion economic relations with the satellites would tend to break down the closemess of ties between the satellites in Moscow and this should be a very definite policy effort on our part. I noted that Moscow had discouraged the Rumanian steel mill because it did not fit into their pattern of economic integration of the satellites and the Soviet Union. The President then stated that he agreed that we should attempt to pull the satellites away. He then brought up the question of Tito and asked if I could give him the name of the best man who could serve as Ambassador to Yugoslavia who would be able to "win the girl away from Khrushchev." He said that in his opinion this man should be an experienced, able man, perhaps in his 50's and preferably a Republican, who could carry the confidence of the Republicans and a personality who could win Tito's confidence and allegiance. I responded by stating that I would prepare a list of competent people who I felt could]

6/MC

serve in this capacity and also in others. In this connection, the President stated that he was not satisfied with the Ambassador-elect to Yugoslavia and had therefore held up the appointment. His request for help and the suggestion of names in connection with Yugoslavia and the satellites is along the same line as to who would be a good representative in South Vietnam.

4. The President asked concerning our relationships on the Hill. I said that they were excellent. The only problem was a continual harangue for a Joint Committee on Intelligence. I said that I felt that if Senator Russell would expand his Committee to include Fulbright and Hickenlooper, and Vinson expand his Committee to include two members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, that the issue would be put to rest. The President said he thought this was a good idea and that he would speak to both Fulbright and Russell about it.

5. I then reviewed the brochure on the OXCART by giving the President a broad picture of this development. I explained that surfacing of it was a problem which had been under consideration by Defense and CIA which I had discussed with President Kennedy. I said that McNamara was pressing for a rather early release but that President Kennedy felt that the timing of the surfacing was of very great importance. I said that I felt that the timing was even of greater importance now and I had some reservations about surfacing this vehicle in the first few days of President Johnson's administration. The President seemed to agree and suggested that McNamara, Rusk, Bundy and I meet with him on Friday for a discussion of this problem.

No arrangements were made as to the time of Friday morning's briefing.

JAM/mfb (tape)

26 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with The President - 25 November and 26 November

1. On Monday, November 25th, there was no briefing of the President, although there was a short visit with him at the State reception on Monday evening. The President then expressed regret that events of the day prevented a briefing and asked if there was any development requiring his attention. I replied there was none and would call him if any developments came to my attention.

2. On Tuesday, the 26th, I briefed the President, reviewing all items on the Check List and the world reaction summary contained in the Bulletin. Briefing and discussion on other matters consumed about 15 or 20 minutes.

3. The President asked if our entire applicable resources had been made available to the FBI in connection with their report, which he had ordered. I replied affirmatively.

NOTE: I should call J. Edgar Hoover concerning this. (DCI did this at 11:20 on 11/26/63)

4. The President asked my appraisal of the situation in Vietnam. I replied that I was less optimistic than was the report received from Ambassador Lodge.

5. Mr. Bundy stated the first order of business was to assist State and assign a Deputy Chief of Mission capable of running the Country Team and the American official community. Bundy recommended Mr. Sullivan, Harriman's deputy. The President plans to have a man in position not later than January first.

6. McCone stated that there remained a number of individuals in Saigon who continued to be troublemakers and should be removed. Bundy confirmed this and stated actions were to be taken. No names were mentioned.

NOTE: Apparently the President's appointment secretary will be a Mr. Moyers. We should get to know him.

7. The President noted with some considerable contempt the fact that certain people in the Department of Justice had suggested to him on Saturday that an independent investigation of the President's assassination should be conducted by a high level group of attorneys and jurists, probably headed by Governor Dewey. President Johnson rejected this idea, and then heard that the identical plan was to be advanced in a lead editorial in the Washington Post. The President felt this was a deliberate plant and he was exceedingly critical. He personally intervened, but failed with Mr. Al Friendly and finally "killed" the editorial with Mrs. Graham.

JAM/TMLee/mfb

25 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: South Vietnam Situation

ATTENDANCE: The President, Secretaries Rusk, McNamara, Ball, Messrs. Bundy and McCone, Ambassador Lodge
Nov 24th - 3 PM Exec Office Bldg.

1. Ambassador Lodge reported that the change in government had been an improvement, that he was hopeful over the outlook, that he expected a speedup of the war, he thought by February or March we would see marked progress. Lodge stated that we were not involved in the coup, though we put pressures on the South Vietnamese government to change its course and those pressures, most particularly on indications of withdrawal by 1965, encouraged the coup. Lodge stated that there were indications that North Vietnam might be interested in arrangements which would be of a nature satisfactory to us. He did not elaborate. He that that everybody was very happy after the coup and showed some pictures of the crowds in Saigon. He mentioned that Gen. Don would be here and that those talking with him should influence him to put on all the pressure he could. He spoke most highly of the Papal delegate and his intention to see the Pope on Wednesday. He carried with him a letter from the Papal Delegate and also from the Bishop of Saigon, apparently praising the actions in upsetting the Diem government. Lodge said he saw dangers of an anti-Christian move and this was his purpose in seeing the Pope. He made a point that Bishop Thuc had engaged in serious persecutions involving the imprisonment of a great many people, including three Catholic priests. He also made the point that Can, Diem's brother, also engaged in a variety of activities of persecution and the execution of individuals and that Can had, on his own premises, a burial ground for his victims. Lodge said that we were in no way responsible for the death of Diem and Nhu, that had they followed his advice, they would be alive today. He said that he saved Can from assassination and that Bishop Thuc was out of Saigon under orders from the Papal delegate. (Note: I question whether the Papal delegate can order a Bishop out of a country.) The tone of Ambassador Lodge's statements were optimistic, hopeful, and left the President with the impression that we are on the road to victory.

I see no basis for CIA's excision.

At this point McCone stated that our estimate of the situation was somewhat more serious. We had noted a continuing increase in Viet Cong activity since the first of November as evidenced by a larger number of Viet Cong attacks. We also noticed with considerable concern a high level of message volume on the Viet Cong military and political networks and this might quite possibly reflect preparations for further sustained guerrilla pressures. Furthermore I stated that the military were having considerable trouble in completing the political organization of the government and were receiving little if any help from civilian leadership. Indeed it seemed to us that the competent civilians were staying on the sidelines and continuing their traditional role of critics rather than turning in and being helpful. I concluded by stating that we could not at this point or time give a particularly optimistic appraisal of the future.

The President then stated that he approached the situation with some misgivings. He noted that a great many people throughout the country questioned our course of action in supporting the overthrow of the Diem regime. He also noted that strong voices in the Congress felt we should get out of Vietnam. Both of these facts give the President considerable concern. He stated that he was not at all sure that we took the right course in upsetting the Diem regime but this was a decision that he did not have to make as it was a fait accompli. He said now that it was done, we have to see that our objectives were accomplished. (Note: The inferences were that, left to his own devices, he would not have supported the courses of action which led to the coup.)

The President then stated he has never been happy with our operations in Vietnam. He said there had been serious dissension and divisions within the American community and he told the Ambassador that he was in total charge and he wanted the situation cleaned up. He wanted no more divisions of opinion, no more bickering and any person that did not conform to policy should be removed. At this point Mr. Bundy stated that we were searching for a replacement for Truehart and what we wanted was a capable administrator who could run the Country Team. The President again repeated his insistence that the Ambassador was the Number One man and he, the President, was holding the Ambassador personally responsible.

Secretary McNamara stated that he had examined the economic situation and that he felt we must give generously of economic aid and must not ask the South Vietnamese government to do the impossible at this particular time.

The President then said that he supported this, but at the same time he wanted to make it abundantly clear that he did not think we had to reform every Asian into our own image. He said that he felt all too often when we engaged in the affairs of a foreign country we wanted to immediately transform that country into our image and this, in his opinion, was a mistake. He was anxious to get along, win the war - he didn't want as much effort placed on so-called social reforms.

Note: I received in this meeting the first "President Johnson tone" for action as contrasted with the "Kennedy tone". Johnson definitely feels that we place too much emphasis on social reforms; he has very little tolerance with our spending so much time being "do-gooders"; and he has no tolerance whatsoever with bickering and quarreling of the type that has gone on in South Vietnam.

The meeting was followed by a statement to the press which was given out by Bundy to the effect that we would pursue the policies agreed to in Honolulu adopted by the late President Kennedy. A picture was taken of the President with Lodge, McNamara, Rusk and Ball.

JAM (tape)/mfb

References: 1. IN-66988, 23 Nov 63
2. SC No. 11709/63, 18 Nov 63
Subj: The Military Situation in South Vietnam

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE BULLETIN

23 November 1963

DAILY BRIEF

*South Vietnam: The accelerated tempo of Viet Cong activity in the post-coup period continues.

While the 149 Viet Cong attacks recorded during the week ending 18 November are a drop from the previous week's record high of 233, the number is still about 50 percent above normal for this year. The attacks continue to be on a small-scale. They are targeted primarily against strategic hamlets and outposts, with government paramilitary forces bearing the brunt.

Continuing high message volumes on Viet Cong military and political networks may reflect preparations for sustained guerrilla pressures.

The Saigon government apparently is proceeding with a purge of military officers holding high military, intelligence, and provincial posts under Diem. On 22 November it announced the suspension of 31 officers. Some of these are under arrest. The purges may be partly in response to the demands of student and Buddhist groups seeking revenge against prominent figures who sided with Diem during the Buddhist crisis. (TOP SECRET DINAR)

14-00000

26 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with President Johnson - Sunday, November 24th at 10:00 a.m.

I briefed President Johnson at his residence at 10:00 a.m. Briefing consumed approximately 20 minutes. Reviewed the Checklist and I made the following points:

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1. I explained the space event. [Soviet ships are in place which would indicate a long range ICBM test. However, the ranges are not up, the area is not cleared and therefore the possibility is that a planned ICBM or Lunar shot has been deferred.]

2. I stated I felt the President should, at an early opportunity, receive a briefing on Soviet long range ~~defensive~~ offensive capability, their current air defense capability and the status of the Soviet economy.

3. I referred briefly to our estimate of the Cuban situation, the condition of their economy and our operational plans against Cuba.

4. I stated that we are watching Venezuela and Ecuador with great care. I gave the President a copy of the November 24th Summary of World Reaction to President Kennedy's Assassination.

JAM:mcm

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14-00000

25 November 1963

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Discussion with President Johnson, November 23rd, about 9:15 a.m. The conversation lasted approximately 15 minutes.

1. The President entered Mr. Bundy's office alone and no one was present during the conversation.

2. The President opened the conversation by recalling a long background of association and friendship with me personally, his respect for the Agency, the fact that on a number of issues that had arisen since I took office as DCI he and I had seen eye to eye, he had complete confidence in me and expressed the wish that I continue in the future exactly as I have in the past.

3. I confirmed my confidence in him, my desire to help and support him in every way and my willingness to continue in the future as I have in recent months.

4. The President then asked of any world developments. I reviewed details of the Checklist with him and explained the institution of the "President's Checklist" with which he was not familiar. I stated that we would continue the publication of the Checklist in the future as we had in the past.

5. It was agreed that for the next few days I would brief the President in the morning personally and that senior staff officers would brief the President's staff each morning as I have in the past. The President asked that any matters of urgent importance be brought to his attention at any time, day or night. He designated no intermediary.

14-00000

6. At 12:30 I went to the President's office in the Executive Office Building to tell him of the information received from Mexico City. In attendance was Mr. Bundy. Following this I had a brief exchange with President Eisenhower who was visiting with President Johnson at the time.

7. This evening I called Secretary Rusk and reviewed with him the information received from Mexico City, most particularly the holding of a Mexican employee of the Cuban Embassy by Mexican officials for interrogation concerning Lee Oswald. I explained to Rusk the information that we had transmitted to the FBI and to the authorities in Dallas. Rusk had not known of these developments prior to my communication with him.

8. I offered the assistance on the part of Mrs. McCone and me personally and also the Agency in connection with the appropriate handling of official visitors arriving from all over the world who might overwhelm the State Department's capacity. Rusk appreciated this offer and said he would call on me. He further said that there may be visitors we would like to meet with and, if so, he would make appropriate arrangements. He indicated that he intended to avoid having all incoming visitors appear as guests of the United States. Each had their own embassy to take care of them, however, he thought there might be some obligations in which I could be helpful. He said that following the Arlington service on Monday afternoon he would hold a reception in the Department which would be in the form of some kind of a buffet and this would be the extent of any planned activities. He thought it was quite probable that the President would meet with several Heads of States at various times on Tuesday and Wednesday.

JAM:mcm
(tape)